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Beat Asthma Triggers on Your Own Home Turf

Maine Department of Health and Human Services

Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention

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Save Money

Try These Cleaning Recipes!

You can include these ingredients in
your regular grocery list.

ALL-PURPOSE SPRAY CLEANER

2 tablespoons baking soda

OR

1/2 teaspoon washing soda, such as Borax

ADD:

2 cups hot tap water

A dime-sized droplet of liquid dish soap

Combine the ingredients in a spray bottle and shake until the
baking soda has dissolved. Apply and wipe off with a rag or a
cellulose sponge.

FURNITURE POLISH

1/2 cup white distilled vinegar

1/4 cup olive oil

2 teaspoons lemon juice

Shake well before using. Dip a clean, dry cloth into the polish
and rub wood in the direction of the grain. Use a soft brush to
work the polish into corners or tight spaces. To remove water
spots, rub a small amount of toothpaste into the area.
Refrigerate remaining liquid after use.



WIND POWER This brochure is printed on 100% recycled paper
manufactured using wind-generated electricity. Wind energy
produces no air pollution that could trigger asthma attacks.



Produced by the
Homes Workgroup of the **Maine Asthma Council**
in collaboration with the
Maine Asthma Program.

For more information about asthma contact:

www.mainepublichealth.gov

Maine Asthma Prevention and Control

207-287-3041



John E. Baldacci, Governor Brenda M. Harvey, Commissioner



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We Are DHHS.*

09/09

Beat
asthma triggers
on your own
home turf.



Take the
Home Quiz
to find out how!

Maine Asthma
COUNCIL
HOMES WORKGROUP



Take the Home Quiz:

Secondhand Smoke

Do you or others smoke in your home? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sometimes

Chemicals and Products

Are products with strong odors such as cleaners, candles and incense used in your home? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sometimes

Heating and Cooling

Do you heat or cook with gas? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sometimes

Do you heat your home with wood? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sometimes

Does your heating or cooling system use filters? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure

Dust

Do you sleep with a pillow cover and a mattress cover for your bed? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure

Do you have carpets, rugs and/or window coverings in your home? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sometimes

Water Damage and Mold

Do you use kitchen or bath fans? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sometimes

Do you see signs of water damage, moisture, or leaks? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure

Do you use a humidifier? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sometimes

Do you see or smell any mold or mildew? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure

Pets and Pests

Do you have pets in the house or do other people visit with their pets? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sometimes

Do you see signs of cockroaches, mice or rats in your home? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure

Are there food crumbs or opened, unsealed foods present in your home? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure

Answers:

Did you answer ‘yes’ ‘sometimes’ ‘or’ ‘not sure’ to any of the questions above? Then you can improve your home environment!

Based on your answers, see below for simple steps you can take and resources you can use for dealing with home-based asthma triggers.

Simple Steps You Can Take:

Secondhand Smoke: Tobacco smoke is a major asthma trigger. Do not allow people to smoke in your home. If you want to quit smoking, call the free Maine Tobacco HelpLine 1-800-207-1230 for help. www.smokefreeforme.org

Chemicals and Products: Limit use of candles, incense and strong smelling cleaning products. Try making your own cleaning products. (See the recipes included in this brochure.) If you have to use cleaners with a strong odor open a window. www.epa.gov/iaq/voc.html

Heating and Cooling: All heating and cooling systems and appliances should be cleaned and checked annually. Replace filters every three months. Vent all systems and appliances to the outside or open a window to let in fresh air. Burn only dry hardwoods in wood stoves. www.maineindoorair.org

Dust: If you are allergic to dust, make sure to use a dust proof cover marked “allergy safe” on your pillow and mattress. Wash your sheets once a week and your bedspreads, quilts and blankets often. Vacuum any rugs or carpets at least once a week. Wash curtains and drapes often. Dust blinds, shades and windowsills monthly with a damp cloth. www.everydayhealth.com/asthma

Water Damage and Mold: Use kitchen and bath fans when cooking and showering. Clean and dry any leaks and spills immediately. Maintain the humidity in your home. Do not use a humidifier unless medically recommended. Use a dehumidifier to keep things dry. Clean surface mold with detergent and water. Wipe dry. www.maineindoorair.org

Pets and Pests:

Do not allow pets in the sleeping area of anyone who has asthma. People with asthma can be sensitive to cockroaches and rodents. Use boric acid or traps to kill pests and then wash all surfaces where pests have been. Clean up crumbs and spills right away. Store food in sealed containers. Take the trash out often. www.thinkfirstspraylast.org

It's Easy!